

## **King County School Readiness Assessment Using Early Development Instrument (EDI)**

### **August 22, 2006**

#### **Background**

Numerous groups and initiatives in King County have focused on school readiness and engaged parents, early childhood educators and school districts. Several efforts were pivotal for implementation of school readiness assessment in King County.

- The Early Learning Opportunity grant included an extensive community engagement effort and community conversations with parents, child care providers and kindergarten teachers about school readiness and developed a school readiness guide for parents in multiple languages in 2003.
- The Early Childhood and School Readiness Action Agenda recommended that the countywide population-based measure of children's readiness for kindergarten is the Early Development Instrument (EDI).

#### **The Early Development Instrument (EDI)?**

The EDI is a survey tool designed to measure how well-prepared groups of children are to learn in school settings. Kindergarten teachers answer questions about how children in their classes are doing in five areas of childhood development. These areas are: *physical health, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development and communication and general knowledge*. The answers are compiled to provide information at the community level about school readiness. Maps display the results by the areas in which children live, so that people can see at a glance where the community is doing well and where some weaknesses are. The EDI was developed and first used in Canada.

#### **EDI assessment in King County**

Public Health—Seattle & King County and the United Way of King County initiated the use of the EDI in three local school districts. Shoreline and Bellevue school districts participated in using the EDI in the 2003-2004 school year and Highline school district completed the EDI assessment in the 2004-2005 school year. All children who are enrolled in kindergarten in a participating school district are included, so that every neighborhood can get a complete picture of how their children are doing and where the gaps are.

The EDI findings have helped to inform community groups, schools, parents, child care providers and other stakeholders about school readiness of children in neighborhoods within these districts. The findings are helping local groups prioritize actions to eliminate gaps in school readiness.

#### **Does the EDI provide an accurate and valid measure of school readiness for all cultural groups and language groups?**

Initially the EDI questions were reviewed locally for cultural bias, resulting in the deletion of one question. In 2005 four statistical analyses were carried out in order to test the EDI for fairness across racial/ethnic and language groups in King County. The results of these analyses give evidence of strong validity and reliability overall. By changing four additional items, the EDI can be strengthened and by increasing teacher training, teacher rating can be made more consistent.

## **How can I learn more about how results from the EDI have been used to improve school readiness?**

Go to this website to learn how British Columbia communities have been making changes based on the EDI: [http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/mapping/mapping\\_faq.htm#q4](http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/mapping/mapping_faq.htm#q4)

For more information please contact Kathryn Horsley at (206) 296-2789 or [kathryn.horsley@metrokc.gov](mailto:kathryn.horsley@metrokc.gov)

## **The five EDI scales and what they measure**

### **Communication Skills and General Knowledge**

- Ability to communicate own needs and understand others
- Clear articulation
- Participation in story telling
- Interest in knowledge about the world

### **Emotional Maturity**

- Interest in helping others
- Level of tolerance for others
- Level of empathy
- Aggressive behavior
- Level of hyperactivity or inattention

### **Language and Cognitive Development**

- Interest in books, reading and language
- Literacy-related behaviors
- Interest in simple math activities
- Numeracy-related behaviors

### **Social Competence**

- Cooperation and respect for others
- Socially-appropriate behavior during school activities
- Approaches to learning
- Readiness to explore new things

### **Physical Health and Well-Being**

- Fine and gross motor development
- Levels of energy
- Daily preparedness for school
- Bathroom independence
- Established handedness